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tative of the bishop. But beyond this all direct record ceases. The various registers contain many references to cases, but there are not found any ecclesiastical court records. This may be due to the fact that, these courts being in the nature of courts of equity, no records are needed; or the records, partaking of the nature of private rather than of public documents, were not carefully preserved. However it may be, an important branch of legal procedure and of constitutional history is left in a very uncertain light. The whole subject of ecclesiastical trials, benefit of clergy, and the relation to the secular courts deserves a fuller and more adequate treatment than it has yet received.

The presentation of the functions of the bishop as given in this volume furnishes a basis for considering the far-reaching power and influence of this high official in the Church, and throws light on the way in which the Church gained control of the public and private affairs of men. This study of the early part of the fourteenth century shows how well under way were the "institutions", "provisions", "inductions", etc., by which the pope was gaining control of the English Church, a control which became well-nigh complete in the fifteenth century, and by virtue of which an enormous revenue went every year from England to Rome.

CHARLES L. WELLS.

Les Origines de la Réforme. Par P. IMBART DE LA TOUR, Professeur à l'Université de Bordeaux. Tome I. *La France Moderne.* (Paris: Hachette et Cie. 1905. Pp. xiii, 572.)

HISTORICAL scholars will cordially welcome the announcement of a new and elaborate history of the Reformation in France, especially as it is to come from the pen of one already well known to students of the middle ages, M. Imbart de la Tour, whose important monograph on the episcopal elections forms a natural prelude to his present more ambitious undertaking. He proposes in the work, of which only the first volume is in hand, to consider the nature and causes of the movement, the conditions in which it took its beginnings, its original spirit and its later transformations, the reasons for the failure of Protestantism to win France, its influence after its defeat, and the grave question whether this defeat meant an advance or a decline in French civilization.

The author discovers a striking parallelism between the religious revolution of the sixteenth century and the social and political revolution at the end of the eighteenth. And as it is now quite clear that no one can hope to understand the latter without a careful study of the *ancien régime*, so the former must remain an ill-comprehended series of external events with no fundamental explanation to those who approach the matter with only the traditional notions of France under Louis XI. and Louis XII. Consequently the author plans—as would appear from the preface—to devote not only this but a succeeding volume, now in preparation, to France before the opening of the religious disturbances.

The present volume falls into three books. Book I., "L'Absolutisme", deals with the structure of the state, the monarchy in its relations to the Church, to feudal institutions, and to the population at large. Book II., "La Renaissance Économique", is devoted to the revival of commerce and trade with its consequences. Book III., "L'Évolution Sociale", considers the great classes of society, the clergy, noblesse, bourgeoisie, and the more humble folk in country and town. The final chapter describes succinctly the social aspects of the intellectual and artistic renaissance.

M. Imbart de la Tour has based his work consistently upon the sources—royal letters, edicts, reports, registers of the *parlements*, reports of local assemblies, a great variety of ecclesiastical documents as well as private correspondence, in addition to the more commonly used pamphlets and memoirs. The national and departmental archives as well as those of the Vatican have been called into requisition. The results of such patient research cannot fail to be of the greatest value, presented as they are in the most admirable spirit and with true French clarity and order.

The author well says, "If the consummation of science is to reduce the complexity of facts to a few laws, its first care must be to reveal the essential complexity of the facts." Instead then of following the well-worn path of his predecessors and attempting to explain the religious commotions by great ideas—such as the antagonism of two races or of two sentiments, or that of the old culture and the new, or between dogmatism and individual conviction—he strikes into the arduous trail which promises to lead him and those who will follow him to the real goal of historic truth, imperfect and partial though this must always be.

JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON.

A History of Political Theories from Luther to Montesquieu. By WILLIAM ARCHIBALD DUNNING, Ph.D., LL.D. (New York: The Macmillan Company; London: Macmillan and Company. 1905. Pp. x, 459.)

THE great positive worth, or at least the great influence, whether for good or for ill, of theory in human life and history is perhaps nowhere so evident and so readily appreciated as in the case of political theory. Political affairs of all sorts and political history have an interest and always have had an interest characteristically direct and practical; so that while at times the political philosopher has been guilty of the wild flights of the theorist, of the intellectual dreamer, his formulae have seldom if ever lacked some of the marks of occasionalistic character, that is to say, of historical setting and local color. True, a very worthy Michigan judge once declared—and this, strangely enough, with reference to Locke's *Treatises of Government*—that theory had never done anything, had never taken any part in the life of actual affairs; but this judge, however respected in his district and however